



AETC News Clips

Keesler AFB, Miss.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **28 Apr 06**

Military readies hurricane response

By JAMES W. CRAWLEY

Media General News Service

WASHINGTON - Three million MREs - pre-packaged military rations - are stockpiled, along with thousands of cots, blankets, blue tarps and toiletry kits. About 1,500 trucks, each tracked by satellites, are ready to move on a moment's notice. Air Force pilots fly practice missions in new, state-of-the-art planes. The Pentagon is mobilizing for the war on hurricanes. The storm season begins June 1. "This isn't any different from supporting Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom," said Col. Eric Smith of the Defense Logistics Agency. "We're using the same skills."

Last year, the military, along with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, was criticized for a bureaucracy-slowed response to Hurricane Katrina. Some National Guard units weren't ordered to Louisiana and Mississippi until more than two days after the storm passed. Military officials have promised Congress better coordination and a faster response if hurricanes strike the United States. The Defense Logistics Agency, based at Fort Belvoir, Va., has already set aside food and other supplies in case of a hurricane, said Smith, chief of the agency's logistics center. "We're the logistics provider for FEMA," Smith said. "If they want bottled water, we'll get it for them." Same with food, cots, blankets, fuel, tarps and medical supplies, he added. From military stockpiles, 3 million MREs - meals ready to eat - are ready for immediate shipment to a disaster zone. Like the ones issued to troops, each MRE is a self-contained meal containing an entree, vegetable or starch, snack, dessert, beverage, a heater and a spoon. At 1,250 calories each, they aren't for the weight conscious. Three firms, including Sopakco of Mullins, S.C., furnish MREs to the military. Beyond food, the logistics command has created a list of must-have items needed right after a hurricane. These so-called "first-to-go" supplies fill a list of obvious and not-so-obvious items - water and blankets and also baby wipes and cargo slings to hoist supplies underneath helicopters. One complaint after Katrina was the inefficient distribution of supplies because trucks often went to the wrong location or got lost. "We couldn't tell (relief officials) where the food was," Smith said. "We could only say when it left the depot, but we couldn't tell them where it was in transit." The military has 1,500 tractor-trailers equipped with satellite communications gear on call. Each shipment will be tracked continuously, and military officials can re-route supplies as needs change. The logistics agency is ideally suited for the disaster job, said Smith. "We understand how to crisis manage," he said. Much of the Pentagon's hurricane response will be the duty of the U.S. Northern Command, in Colorado Springs, Colo. It will oversee the movement of troops, aircraft, vehicles and supplies supporting relief efforts. Beefed-up communications between local and national relief officials, including portable radio systems, are being readied and a joint Air Force, Coast Guard and National Guard search-and-rescue center is planned. But, the military will not be in charge. It will receive its orders from FEMA, said a military spokesman. Military pilots will likely be the first to see any developing hurricane up close. The 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron is the military's Hurricane Hunters. Based at Keesler Air Force Base, near Gulfport, Miss., the unit is still recovering from Katrina. The base took a direct hit and suffered about \$1 billion in damage. Katrina forced the squadron to evacuate to a Georgia air base. "Everyone (in the squadron) was

Media News

PAGE: Internet

DATE: 28 Apr 06



AETC News Clips

Keesler AFB, Miss.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **28 Apr 06**

affected by the storm, but we never missed a (flight)," said Maj. Chad Gibson, who is an aerial reconnaissance weather officer. Last season, the Air Force unit flew more than 1,200 hours inside hurricanes, making 220 penetrations into storm eyes. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration flies its own hurricane-searching planes from MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla. The Air Force is flying 10 new hurricane-tracking planes, the WC-130J model. It's roomier, has more powerful engines, a digital cockpit and state-of-the-art weather observation equipment to improve and speed up forecasting. And, for Gibson, the new planes have a big advantage. In the older model, when Gibson needed to observe waves or clouds, he had to unbuckle, leave his seat and walk to a window to look out. "Walking around (a plane) during a hurricane can be very hairy at times," he said. Now, his seat is next to a window.

Media News

PAGE: Internet

DATE: 28 Apr 06



AETC News Clips

Laughlin AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **28 Apr 06**

Del Rio residents stand firm in opposition to big development

Hundreds show up for meeting, saying project will hurt their town.

BY JOHN MACCORMACK
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

DEL RIO — If the City Council here had any lingering doubts about the intensity of public opposition to a 3,200-acre development proposed to go next door to Laughlin AFB, the roughly 500 residents who jammed the civic center late Tuesday set council members straight.

Wearing stickers and waving placards that read "Save Laughlin," the crowd appeared to cross all the ethnic, income and cultural lines in this border

city of 34,000.

And of the 26 people who spoke during a heated hearing on the project, only one favored it.

Approved on April 11 in a 4-3 council vote, the project now faces a possible recall, either through a public referendum or another council vote.

Opponents say it will endanger the Air Force training base just outside town, which provides many of the best jobs here.

"This is a bad project for Del Rio, and three of you have enough sense to realize that you don't toy with the goose that laid the golden egg," former Councilman Lee Weathersbee said to rousing applause.

Base officials have declined to take a public position on the project, which would sit on

Laughlin's western fence line.

Other speakers at the meeting chided the council for voting on the project two weeks ago despite public pleas for a delay and for overlooking other parts of the city badly in need of basic services such as sidewalks, lighting and drainage.

"The citizens of Del Rio get it. Their neighborhoods will not be developed if this project takes place," said Sandra Fuentes, representing "The Border Organization," a sister

See DEL RIO/5B

Del Rio council to study development further

CONTINUED FROM 1B

group to Communities Organized for Public Service in San Antonio.

Several speakers took potshots at developer David Earl of San Antonio, who had a front-row seat for the evening, questioning his character, intentions and track record as a builder.

Earl is developing the \$750 million project with John Schaefer, also of San Antonio.

Plans call for construction of 4,100 residential units, 450,000 square feet of retail space, half a million square feet of business park and 4 million square feet slated for industrial use. Also planned are three schools and a public golf course.

"The gentlemen who designed this won't be here when it goes bad. They will be gone, just like Laughlin AFB," said Jeremy Sibert, pointing at Earl and his associates.

A woman offered the nightmarish — if unfounded — specter of it becoming an enclave of tight-fisted retirees from California.



"They will vote to keep school taxes down. It will change the dynamic of Del Rio. This is a family-based community, and I want it to stay that way," Jane Lorrain said.

Only Bob Dinoir, a retired Border Patrol pilot involved in a separate project with Earl in Del Rio, spoke in support of it.

"The developer is the one at risk. It's not a government giveaway. The project should go forward," said Dinoir, who earned boos for his opinion.

After all the sound and fury, at evening's end the matter

stood exactly where it had begun.

With only Councilwoman Pat Cole voting to oppose the motion, the council voted to table the issue for further study.

Earl has claimed that the referendum repeal process outlined in the City Charter cannot be applied to the ordinance in which the council approved the project. The city's outside lawyers share this view, said Mayor Dora Alcalá, a strong supporter of the project.

What happens next is not clear. Contacted Wednesday, Del

Rio City Attorney David Sorola said only that "we're going to do more legal research, find out where we stand and what options we have."

Earl, who left the meeting without commenting, did not return calls Wednesday. He has vowed to go forward with site preparation despite public opposition and the attempts to repeal the city's participation in the project.

The project is to be built on a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone in which all property tax revenue would be invested in project infrastructure for 25 years, an amount estimated between \$80 million and \$130 million.

Despite popular fears that it will imperil Laughlin, city officials and the developers said concerns raised by the Air Force have been addressed.

Laughlin, one of four Air Force pilot training bases, sits a few miles east of town on U.S. 90 and is surrounded by miles of undeveloped ranch land.

jmacormack@express-news.net

Del Rio News

PAGE:

ISSUE DATE: 25 Apr 06



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 28 Apr 06

4

OPINION

Speak Out

Have an opinion or a question about a public issue? Post it anytime of day at the Peoria issues forum at www.newszapforums.com/forum24/. It is a hometown forum so visit the page as often as you would like and share your comments (but no personal attacks or profanities, please). You can also make a comment by calling our Speak Out 24-hour opinion line at 445-2891. Comments will be published in the newspaper as space permits.

PLANE GOES DOWN: That F-16 that went down recently, the people lucked out that it went down into the open field, not into two or three houses. What is this governor of this state going to do about it? Is she going to wait until it kills three or four or five people and wipes out a couple of houses before she does anything to stop these planes from flying over the city and flying over Sun City and Sun City West? What is she going to do about it? Nothing? Like all the rest of the politicians?

Sun Cities Independent

PAGE:

DATE: 28 Apr 06



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **28 Apr 06**

Jet crash raises some ‘what ifs’

A little more than three years after the city of Goodyear settled with the owners of Duncan Family Farms and agreed to pay Arnott and Kathleen Duncan \$3.5 million to move their educational farming operation, the wisdom of the action was hammered home.

The Luke Air Force Base F-16 that crashed last Tuesday hit the ground very near the Duncans’ former property.

The February 2003 settlement agreement provided for Goodyear’s purchase of the Duncans’ 44 acres at the corner of Cotton Lane and Indian School Road. The April 11, 2006, crash occurred near Camelback Road and Cotton Lane, just a mile north of the former Family Farms location.

The Family Farms was used as an educational tool to teach young children about what farmers do and where their food comes from, and hundreds of children visited the farm every week. However, changes in legislation and in Luke flight patterns in 2001 raised the level of concern over public activities at Duncan Family Farms. The change in flight routes involved up to 95 percent of Luke’s flights taking off using the southern departure corridor, including all flights carrying munitions, making for further public safety concerns.

After conducting the school tours and other public activities for several years, the Duncans learned in March 2002 that Duncan Family Farms was in Luke’s “Accident Potential Zone” or APZ. They subsequently stopped their educational tours, private parties and public festivals on the property. It was a sad time for the entire West Valley; the Duncans were highly lauded for their award-winning educational farm.

But, last Tuesday’s crash reaffirmed the wisdom of closing the farm at Indian School road and Cotton Lane.

Life is full of “what ifs,” but when it comes to the safety of children, we can’t gamble with “what ifs” such as “what if Duncan Family Farms were still in operation” and “what if hundreds of elementary-age school children were visiting the farm on that day” and “what if the plane happened to go down just a mile to the south of where it did go down?”

Furthermore, last week’s crash punctuated the wisdom of imposing restrictions on residential developments under the Luke flight paths. What if that plot of land had been full of homes?